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ANGELUS SILESIUS: A SEVENTEENTH-
CENTURY MYSTIC

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During the last quarter-century more investigation than ever before has been going on into the unconscious activities of the human mind, or, as the investigators have preferred to call it, the sub-conscious mind. This has led in psychology to the study of apparitions and the various forms of telepathy, and in religion to a revival of Quietism. Religious bodies as far from Quakerism as the Episcopal Church are holding retreats for meditation, silent prayer, "the practice of the presence of God." The exclusion of worldly thought is pointed to as the means for the opening of the soul to the incoming of the Divine; and some are following the Mystic Way through its steps of Purgation, Illumination, and Ecstasy to its goal of absorption into God in the Unitive Life.

This revived interest at the present time in Mysticism is not surprising. For in an age which is devoted to efficiency and moved largely by machinery, when thought is subordinated to action, and the quality most highly prized is power, there will always be those who turn away in sadness and disgust from the rush of effort and seek to find God by walking in the garden in the cool of the day; who adjust themselves to receiving, confident that from all sides the universe will pour its wealth into them if they do but furnish capacity for reception. They turn to those who in the midst of their strenuous

activities are distrustful of any attainment except through effort, and say,

“Think you, ’mid all this mighty sum
Of things for ever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come,
But we must still be seeking?”

It was when the might of paganism was asserting itself under Diocletian against Christianity that the Fayoum was filled by St. Anthony and his monks. Meister Eckart, Tauler, and Ruysbroeck lived in a world busy with petty wars and petty politics. And it was in 1624, shortly after the beginning of the Thirty Years' War, that Johann Scheffler, afterwards known as Angelus Silesius, was born in Silesia at Breslau or perhaps at Glatz. He is less known than his fourteenth-century predecessors, or even than his master, Jakob Boehme; but he is interesting for the completeness with which he represents the positions of Mysticism and for the daring with which he accepts the conclusions of its logic. Our busy age may well find a lesson in him. After reading his *Cherubinischer Wandersmann* one is inclined to say, as of *The Apocalypse*, “Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.”

He was a Lutheran by birth and education, and took to studying medicine at Strassburg, Padua, Leyden, and Amsterdam, with strong interests also in theology and poetry. After taking his doctor's degree in philosophy and medicine at Padua he became, in 1649, court physician to the strongly Lutheran Duke Sylvius Nimrod at Oels in Württemberg. He remained here, however, only three years, and then returned to Breslau. He found the ecclesiastical atmosphere in both places uncongenial. The early glow of the Reformation had given place to the acrimonies and hair-splittings of Protestant scholasticism. The Lutheran was bitter against the Calvin-

ist and the Calvinist against the Lutheran and both against the Zwinglian, and the bitterness of all against one another was often greater than against their common enemy, Rome. Ever since the Psalmist hesitated to announce the message which had brought light to his soul through fear that it would offend the devout, and warned himself — “If I say, ‘I will speak thus,’ behold, I should offend against the generation of Thy children” — through all the ages, the bitterly pious ecclesiastic, narrowly zealous for his own type of orthodoxy, has been the strongest agency in turning men away from religion. And men of this type abounded, both at the Duke’s court and in Silesia. Jakob Boehme, who died in the year Scheffler was born, had been browbeaten and silenced for five years by an aggressive clerical guardian of Protestant orthodoxy in Silesia; and a half-century later Duke Sylvius’s court preacher fell foul of the court physician. Protestantism, as Scheffler met it, was unlovely. Its emphasis upon doctrine, its straining at the gnat of conformity while swallowing the camel of un-Christlikeness, its suspicion of good works, and the coldness with which it regarded that immediate union with God which its own son, Boehme, had claimed, all combined with the unattractiveness of those who were its representatives to turn Scheffler from it. There are people of whom we say, “They are good, but”—; and that “but” is like Pharaoh’s lean kine, which devoured all the fat kine that were before them. So it was with those who to Scheffler stood for Protestantism; and on June 12, 1653, he abandoned it and entered the Roman Catholic Church. He had the zeal of the new convert; he would shake off the very dust of Protestantism from his feet. And so he adopted a new name. It had been his growing interest in Mysticism which had helped in bringing him into his new surroundings. He took, consequently, for a kind of godfather a Spanish

Mystic of the sixteenth century, Johannes de Angelis, and borrowing his name, called himself Johannes Angelus. But as there was a contemporary Protestant doctor of theology by that name, he could not risk the contamination of being confused with him, and he therefore appended the distinguishing adjective "Silesius," from the province of his birth, and he was known thereafter as Johannes Angelus Silesius.

He must previously have gained some distinction; for in less than a year after his conversion the Austrian Emperor, Frederick III, conferred on him the title of court physician. It was in this case only a title, the position carrying no duties and no income, but giving him the standing of a distinguished person and shielding him from the annoyances which his ecclesiastical change might involve. For seven years now he devoted himself to the study of dogmatics, and to perhaps composing, certainly publishing, his two chief poetical works. The first, appearing in 1657, had the title, *Geistreiche Sinn- und Schlussreime*. This title was changed in the second edition to *Johannis Angeli Silesii Cherubinischer Wandersmann. Geistreiche Sinn- und Schlussreime zur göttlichen Beschaulichkeit anleitende*. A second poem or collection of poems, which appeared almost at once, showing that it had been composed before the publication of the first, was headed *Heilige Seelenlust, oder geistliche Hirtenlieder der in ihren Jesum verliebten Psyche; gesungen von Johann Angelo Silesio und von Herrn Georgio Josepho mit ausbündig schönen Melodien geziert*.

In 1651 he entered the Franciscan Order and was consecrated priest. His prominence in the affairs of the Church in Breslau led some of his former Protestant associates to circulate scurrilous songs attacking him. He shortly afterwards replied in a pamphlet, in which he ascribed the recent victories of the Turks to a judgment of God for the secession of the Protestants from

the Church of Rome. The Lutheran theologians were naturally not inclined to this view, and several prominent among them replied; and so began an unedifying controversy, with all the polemic heat, the sharpness of tongue and personal vilification, which the time regarded as proper in discussion. It is always easier to set a dog barking than to stop him by the soundest arguments. In twelve years Scheffler published fifty-five blasts against the Protestants, bitter as aloes but without their wholesomeness. One can readily see how the arm of even so doughty a champion might by that time have grown weary, and why he gradually grew tired of making faces. Many of his Catholic friends too were not altogether pleased at having him as their representative. He was persuaded to retire from active conflict, and was allowed to choose the chief smooth stones out of the brook with which he had slain his Philistines and publish them under the title "*Ecclesiologia, bestehend in 39 verschiedenen auserwählten Traktätlein.*" He had been a person of importance in the State as well as the Church; for in 1664 he had been appointed marshal and counselor to the prince-bishop of Breslau, a position which gave weight to the polemics in which he was engaged. But the slackening of his polemical ardor coincided with the death of his friend Sebastian, the prince-bishop, and in 1671 he resigned his offices and retired to the monastery of St. Matthias in Breslau. Here for six years he was occupied in editing his works and communing with his soul. He apparently never saw the opposition between the two, nor felt it strange that one whose ideal was expressed in the popular hymn,

"Ruhe ist das beste Gut
Das mann haben kann,"

should find his great interest and chief occupation in the hot activities of acrimonious polemics. Just after

the publication in 1677 of his *Ecclesiologia*, the arsenal of his munitions of war, he died. His conviction that to one spiritually minded the things of the flesh, including pain, are nothing —

“Mensch, bist du Gott getreu, und meinst Ihn allein,
So wird die grösste Noth ein Paradies dir seyn” (I, 131)—¹

this conviction was put to the test by a severe and painful illness. To him, as to many another Christian, the process of being unclothed was one in which he groaned, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon. Yet while one hand remained entangled in earthly things, the other with its firm grip on heaven was ever lifting him upward.

I have spoken of his poetry as comprised in two volumes. He published a third in 1675 entitled *Johannis Angeli Silesii Beschreibung der vier letzten Dinge*. It is a vivid portrayal of death, the Judgment Day, the eternal pains of the damned, and the eternal joys of the saved, which he hoped would convert the impenitent. But, like most sulphurous whiffs of the atmosphere of hell, the flavor of brimstone repels one from the preacher rather than from the place, or else is discounted as unreal and passed by with derision, while the joys ascribed to heaven are pallid and unattractive to warm-blooded humanity. There is hardly any kinship between this attempt to get the accounts of the world ready for the Day of Judgment and the *Heilige Seelenlust* or the *Geistreiche Schlussreime*. The Cherubinischer Wandersmann did not travel into this grim country.

The *Heilige Seelenlust*, whose extended title I have already given, is a mild decoction of *Solomon's Song*. The love of the soul or Psyche for Jesus is set forth in the sensuous, sometimes sensual, terms of physical passion which have been not uncommon in minds where

¹ “Art thou but true to God, seeking no other gain,
Thou wilt find Paradise even in the sharpest pain.”

ecstasy has followed meditation. Of the two hundred and five poems which the volume contains, most are to a modern reader simply dull. The expression of love and longing rarely rises above the commonplace. Of the five Books into which it is divided, the first three form an orderly whole. The Saviour is accompanied on his journey through life from his birth to his ascension, and the soul exults in union with him here and hereafter. The other two Books, published later and separately, contain poems on the spiritual life but unrelated to one another.

The *Heilige Seelenlust* is a mine in which the compilers of hymn-books have dug. Heinrich Müller's *Geistliche Seelenmusik*, which appeared in 1669, only two years after the publication of Scheffler's book, contained thirty-one hymns taken from it. In the course of the next half-century half a dozen hymn-books acknowledged their debt to it, and sometimes the debt was large; as in case of the *Freylinghausen Gesangbuch*, which included fifty-two out of Scheffler's two hundred and five pieces. The hymnologists of the Pietistic Movement found Scheffler's ardent commonplaces to their taste and borrowed them even more fully. In the more recent Evangelical hymn-books some still retain their place. Among these are

- "Liebe, die du mich zum Bilde" (II, 338),
- "Ich will dich lieben, meine Stärke" (I, 30),
- "Mir nach spricht Christus unser Held" (V, 580),
- "Ich danke dir für deinen Tod" (I, 190),
- "Jesus ist der schönste Nahm" (I, 103).

Some have been translated into English, or rather paraphrased; the first of those above mentioned by Miss Winkworth, beginning

"O Love, who formedst me to wear
The image of Thy Godhead here";

and the second by John Wesley,

"Thee will I love, my strength and tower."

Miss Winkworth has also translated

"Morgenstern du finstren Nacht" (I, 80).

"Morning Star, in darksome night."

Other translations are the following:

"Komm Liebsten komm in deinen Garten" (III, 289).

"Make my heart a garden fair" (Miss Cox).

"Jesus ist die schönste Nahm" (I, 103).

"Jesus is the highest name" (A. T. Russell).

"Wo wiltu hin weils Abends ist" (II, 217),

"Where wilt thou go? since night draws near" (A. Crull).

The hymns of Angelus Silesius have kept his name alive in Germany. But the world there and elsewhere has been discovering a weightier ground of remembrance in his first volume — *Geistliche Sinn- und Schlussreime*, or, as it is commonly called from the addition to the title in the second edition, the *Cherubinischer Wandersmann*. Man, so the title would indicate, is but a traveler here below, with no abiding place; but through union with God he acquires a super-earthly life and lasting peace, like that of the heaven-inhabiting cherubim. This union of opposites, the earthly and the heavenly, is the ground-tone running throughout the poem. Perhaps it should hardly be called a poem, since that implies more or less unity. The theme on which he is engaged is so great and manifold that endeavoring to reduce it to system would be like attempting to drive one of the beasts of *The Revelation* with seven heads and ten horns, with each head trying to go its own way. So he lets it

take its way, and gives us here a collection of aphorisms, chiefly couplets in Alexandrine verse, having relation to the general theme but little to one another. To attempt therefore to read many of them at a time is like riding in a jolting cart over a rough road, and is unwise. They are rather to be treated in the way our Puritan forefathers took the Bible, when they bit off a verse or two in the morning and chewed on them throughout the day. The mastication of Scheffler's verses is not facilitated by beauty of style, for they are so condensed that they must dispense with amplifications and embellishments. To compare him with his immediate predecessors in English poetry: he has no kinship with the beauty-loving school of Spenser; he has much in common with the hard-thinking, close-knit phraseology of the school of Donne. Moreover he is not a master of technique; he is more intent upon matter than manner, and is often put to bald shifts to subdue his verse. He has his favorite tags which help him to conquer a refractory line — "Mensch, glaube mir," "ich weiss," "kann ich kühnlich sagen," "für und für." These often come in handy when he has said his say but is compelled by the exigence of his metre to fill out the required number of feet. Many of his verses are commonplace. Many are commonplace to us because they were revelations in his day. But there is in many of them a profundity of insight, a depth of feeling, a passion for God, and above all a daring in boldly claiming the conclusions which the logic of his theology carries, which make one who has known him unable to forget him. And occasionally he stumbles into beauty. There is in these couplets a kind of fragrant perfume, such as Isaac detected in his son's garments: "The smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed."

His fundamental position is that God is love. But love means sharing, sharing one's best, sharing all one's

best. And one's best is ever himself. God therefore is for ever endeavoring to pour Himself into us, to give us all of Himself that we are capable of receiving.

"Gott gibet Niemand nichts; Er stehet allen frey,
Dass Er, wo du nur Ihn so willst, ganz deine sey" (I, 21).²

"Gott liebet mich allein; nach mir ist Ihm so bange
Dass Er auch stirbt vor Angst, weil ich Ihm nicht anhangen"
(III, 37).³

Such bountifulness on God's part must result in endowing the soul with all the amplitude of God's own nature.

"Ich bin so gross als Gott; Er ist als ich so klein.
Er kann nich über mich, ich unter Ihm nicht seyn" (I, 10).⁴

This union with God results in the annihilation of time and place and makes eternity present.

"Nicht du bist in dem Ort; der Ort, der ist in dir.
Wirfst du hinaus, so steht die Ewigkeit schon hier" (I, 185).⁵

"Zeit ist wie Ewigkeit und Ewigkeit wie Zeit,
So du nur selber nicht machst einen Unterscheid" (I, 47).⁶

"Mensch, wo du deinen Geist schwingst über Ort und Zeit,
So kannst du jeden Blick seyn in der Ewigkeit" (I, 12).⁷

² "God thrusts Himself on none; He stands for all men free.
So that whate'er thou wilt, He may be unto thee."

³ "God loves the special Me. Anxious for me He is;
So that He would expire of grief, were I not His."

⁴ "God is small as I; I am as great as He.
He cannot above me, nor I beneath Him be."

⁵ "Thou dwellest not in space, but space, it is in thee.
Cast it out, and already is eternity."

⁶ "Eternity is as time, time as eternity.
If they are otherwise, the difference is in thee."

⁷ "Lift up thy soul o'er time and space. The spirit's power
Shall give thee even here eternity each hour."

Both heaven and hell are annihilated.

“Wo in der Hölle nicht kann ohne Hölle leben,
Der hat sich noch nicht ganz dem Höchsten übergeben” (I, 39).⁸

‘Mensch, wird das Paradies in dir nicht erstlich seyn,
So glaube mir gewiss, du kommest nimmer drein” (I, 295).⁹

The efficient agent of the Divine judgments is therefore transferred from without to within the soul.

“Der Himmel ist in dir und auch der Höllen Qual.
Was du erkienst und willst, das hast du überall” (I, 145).¹⁰

“Was klagst du über Gott? Du selbst verdamdest dich.
Er möcht’ es ja nicht thun, das glaube sicherlich” (I, 137).¹¹

This identification of the Divine judgments with the inner workings of the soul has become in the last half-century familiar to us. But it was by no means familiar to the men of Scheffler’s day. The reign of law was then viewed as far more limited in range than since the great rise of scientific knowledge in the last century. To the thought of the men of the seventeenth century events not the direct result of human effort are from the arbitrary will and imposing hand of God. He reaches down from the skies and gives blessings here and punishments there. He takes this man to heaven and sends that one to hell, and there is no telling beforehand what will be the fate of either. Silesius himself in his *Sinnliche Beschreibung* revels in depicting heaven and hell as localities, and describing their pleasures and pains

* “He who in hell — note this! — without hell cannot live,
To his own Best himself as yet he does not give.”

9 “If with thee Paradise exist not first within,
Then, trust me well, thou ne’er wilt come therein.”

¹⁰ “Heaven is in thee, and also in thee is hell’s pain.
Whate’er thou wilt, whate’er thou choosest, thou dost gain.”

¹¹ “But why complain of God, when it is thou alone
Canst ever damn thyself? He sentences no one.”

as poured upon the soul from outside itself. This is the conventional method of religious speech. But into his contemporaries, trained to look thus to a future state for the assessment of moral values, Silesius drove a deeper thought when he proclaimed that the character of the soul not only determines its status but is its status.

“Wie magst du was begehren? Du selber kannst allein
Der Himmel und die Erd’ und tausend Engel seyn” (II, 149).¹²

Not that he was the first to make this discovery, for it was but the development of the Johannine thought, “This is life eternal—to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent”; “This is damnation—that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light.” It was but the consequence of the Pauline thought, in which Christ not only speaks to the soul, not only speaks in the soul, but is identical with the true condition of the soul itself. Silesius, however, was one of the first to proclaim in modern times that the soul is itself the agent in establishing automatically what had been regarded as externally imposed judgments of God.

In carrying out to its full range the conclusion which the logic of the situation authorizes, Angelus Silesius, like Isaiah, is very bold. If God gives Himself to man, then man, in so far, becomes God. Indeed, Silesius in his joyous flight is not always particular to put in the “in so far.” He too will declare “I and my Father are one.”

“Mensch, was du liebst, in das wirst du verwandelt werden;
Gott wirst du, liebst du Gott, und Erde, liebst du Erden”

(V, 200).¹³

¹² “Wherefore desirist thou aught? since thou thyself mayst even
Be earth and myriad angels and the very heaven.”

¹³ “Whate’er thou lovest, Man, that too become thou must;
God, if thou lovest God; dust, if thou lovest dust.”

“Ein grundgelassner Mensch ist ewig frey und Ein.
Kann auch ein Unterscheid an ihm und Gotte seyn?” (II, 141).¹⁴

“Wer ist als wär’ er nicht, und wär’ er nie geworden,
Der ist (o Seligkeit!) zu lauter Gotte worden” (I, 92).¹⁵

In the Preface to the *Cherubinischer Wandersmann*, however, he explains what he means by this oneness with God. It is not strange that he felt the necessity of explanation if such terms as “Vergöttung” and “Gottwerdung” were to pass the ecclesiastical censor. Even with his explanation it seems remarkable that the book received the “Approbatio” of the Jesuit judge and the “Imprimatur” of the Rector of the University of Vienna. Here is his bidding for orthodoxy:

“Inasmuch as the following rhymes contain many unusual paradoxes or contradictory expressions and many profound conclusions not familiar to every one in regard to the mystery of the Godhead — as, for example, union with God or with the Divine being, the Divine likeness, deification, becoming God, and the like — expressions to which, on account of the condensed style, one might easily ascribe a reprehensible sense or give an evil meaning, it is necessary to warn the reader in advance.

“It must be understood once for all that the author’s meaning is in no case that the human soul should or can lose its created character and become changed through deification into God or His uncreated being. For though God is almighty, this He cannot do — and if He could, He would not be God — to make a creature God by nature and essence. So Tauler says in his spiritual instructions: ‘Since the Most High cannot make us gods by nature, for this belongs to Him alone, He has made us gods by grace, so that we may have blessedness, joy, and one and the same kingdom with Him in everlasting love.’ He means by this that the favored holy soul may attain such close union with God and His Divine being as to be penetrated by it through and through, transformed, united with it and made one; so that when

¹⁴ “One who is freed from earth has wholeness, liberty.
How betwixt him and God can any difference be?”

¹⁵ “Who is as he were not, as he had never been,
Has become very God. O blessedness serene!”

men see it, they will see and recognize in it no other than God. It will be as it is in the life eternal, when the soul is wholly swallowed up by the brightness of the Divine majesty. It will indeed attain such complete likeness to God as to be through grace what God is by nature, and thus in a sense may rightly be called, as in these verses, a god in God." ¹⁶

It was a reversal of the usual order of progress, according to which the heresy of one generation becomes the orthodoxy of the next, that such opinions could be approved by ecclesiastical authority in 1657, and in 1687 for holding the same opinions Molinos could be condemned to the dungeons of the Inquisition.

In setting forth the means by which this union with God is to be attained Silesius emphasizes strongly the central doctrine of Mysticism — dualism. The Divine and the human are different; more than that, they are mutually exclusive; the finite is the opposite of the infinite, so that the more of one the less of the other. The only way then by which they can come together is by one ceasing to be itself. As it is unthinkable that God can be the one to change and approach man, it must be on man's side that the approach is made. Man must empty himself of all that is characteristic of humanity: not only of positive sin but of all desire, will, endeavor, which in this view become sin. He must become nothing; and the more completely he succeeds in this self-annihilation, the more completely he becomes one with God. There was in the seventeenth century no study of comparative religion to point out to Silesius his kinship with Buddhism, and he had probably never heard of Plotinus. His spiritual ancestors were Meister Eckhart, Tauler, and most directly, as I have said, Boehme, though he does not care to mention him after his own conversion to Romanism. His was the world-old line of thought which dwells on the otherness of God, and

¹⁶ *Der Cherubinischer Wandersmann* (ed. Sulzbach, 1829); Vorrede, pp. vi, vii.

which meets us today in the Roman Mass, in popular theories of the Atonement, and in the revivalist's song,

"O to be nothing, nothing!
Only to lie at His feet,
A broken and empty vessel
For the Master's uses meet!"

Silesius is continually pressing home the need of this self-emptying and of thorough-goingness in it, and describing the blissful condition which results. For this he has many names — Abgeschiedenheit, Abgestorbenheit, Vernichtigkeit, Ledigkeit, Gelassenheit, Heiligkeit, Gleichheit, Seligkeit, Friede, Ruhe. When the process is complete and one has reached "gänzliche Verneinung des Willens," he has attained "Vergöttung."

"Die Heiligen sind darum mit Gottes Ruh umfungen
Und haben Seligkeit, weil sie nach nichts verlangen" (I, 169).¹⁷

"Mensch, so du etwas liebst, so liebst du nichts fürwahr.
Gott ist nicht diess und das; drum lass das Etwas gar" (I, 44).¹⁸

"Nicht bringt dich über dich, als die Vernichtigkeit.
Wer mehr vernichtig ist, der hat mehr Göttlichkeit" (II, 140).¹⁹

"Geh aus, so geht Gott ein; stirbt dir, so lebst du Gott;
Sey nicht, so ist es Er; thu nichts, so g'schieht's Gebot"
(II, 136).²⁰

Logic again drives him. "Then if desire is evil, you must not desire even God." "True," replies he sturdily:

"Ein wahrer armer Mensch steht ganz auf nichts gericht.
Gibt Gott ihm gleich sich selbst, ich weiss, er nimmt Ihn nicht"
(II, 148).²¹

¹⁷ "They who are held in God's sweet peace are blest in this —
That they have no desire; therefore they dwell in bliss."

¹⁸ "Thou lovest not aright, lov'st thou aught here below.
God is not This nor That; so let the Somethings go."

¹⁹ "Nought raises thee above thyself like nothingness.
God is the more in thee as thou thyself art less."

²⁰ "Go out, and God comes in; die, God thy soul will fill.
Be not, and there is He; do nought, He has His will."

²¹ "One who is truly poor, no compromise can make.
Should God give him Himself, even this he would not take."

Even Christ had to conform to this rigid law of willlessness:

“Auch Christus, wär in Ihm ein kleiner eigner Wille,
Wie selig Er auch ist, Mensch! glaube mir, Er fiele” (V, 32).²²

Like every profound thinker, Silesius does not balk at the necessity of holding opposites. Consistency is not to be attained by an “either, or.” He may choose to hold both or neither. He is like a dog hunting. One who looks from a distance might think directness of aim was the last thing to be ascribed to him, as he turns here and there and forwards and backwards; yet all the time, though his path is crooked, his course is straight on the scent. So Silesius, though he has declared that the human will must be wholly dead, yet declares also that it is the will which preserves each in his condition:

“Der Will macht dich verlorn, der Will macht dich gefunden,
Der Will der macht dich frey, gefesselt und gebunden” (VI, 82).²³

“Gott kann schon ewiglich nicht die Verdammten finden,
Weil sie stets durch ihr’n Will’n vor Ihm in Pfuhl verschwinden”
(VI, 81).²⁴

It is not God’s decree but only the Devil’s own perverse will that keeps him a devil; and here Silesius is even more hopeful for the lord of hell than Robert Burns:

“Die Sonne muss ihr Licht all’n, die es woll’n, gewähren.
Der Teufel wird erleucht, wollt’ er zu Gott sich kehren”
(VI, 40).²⁵

²² “Christ himself, if he had an atom of self-will,
However holy too, would not have been Christ still.”

²³ “Thy will, it makes thee lost; thy will, it makes thee found;
Thy will, it makes thee free, or fast in fetters bound.”

²⁴ “God cannot find a wretch deep in the pool of hell
Because it is his fixed will therein to dwell.”

²⁵ “The sun, on all who turn to him, must brightly burn.
The Devil’s face would shine, if he to God would turn.”

“Gott ist dem Belzebub nah wie dem Seraphin.
Es kehrt nur Belzebub den Rücken gegen Ihn” (V, 72).²⁶

Again, while he maintains that the finite must be absorbed in the infinite, he insists that this does not abolish personality. And here, in spite of startling expressions, he parts company from the thorough-going Mystic, who walks straight up to a void Nirvana. But what Silesius welcomes is not annihilation but absorption, when, in presence of the glorious Infinite, all other beings are drowned, like stars in day. Personality, he maintains, persists after death.

“Der Geist lebt in sich selbst. Gebricht ihm gleich das Licht,
(Wie ein Verdammter wird) so stirbet er doch nicht” (II, 160).²⁷

“Ich glaube keinen Tod. Sterb’ ich gleich alle Stunden,
So hab ich jedesmal ein besser Leben funden” (I, 30).²⁸

“Ich sag, es stirbet nichts; nur dass ein ander Leben,
Auch selbst das peinliche, wird durch den Tod gegeben” (I, 36).²⁹

Such union is so close that it becomes indissoluble; God Himself cannot tear it apart. The particular becomes as necessary to the universal as the universal to the particular. I am essential to God.

“Gott is mir Gott und Mensch; ich bin Ihm Mensch und Gott.
Ich lösche seinen Durst, und Er hilft mir aus Noth” (I, 224).³⁰

“Wer Gott vereinigt ist, den kann Er nicht verdammen;
Er stürze sich dann selbst mit ihm in Tod und Flammen” (I, 97).³¹

²⁶ “God is both to the Fiend and to the Seraph near.
But the Fiend turns his back on God, and will not hear.”

²⁷ “Spirit must ever live. It may in darkness lie,
As do the damned; yet even then it cannot die.”

²⁸ “There is no death, I hold. Should I die every hour,
Yet every hour there is a better life in store.”

²⁹ “Nothing that is, can die. It is but life again
That follows death, even though a life of fiercest pain.”

³⁰ “I find in God a man; I find in man a God.
I slake His thirst, and He must needs help me, a clod.”

³¹ “He who is joined to God can suffer no damnation;
For God Himself would perish in his conflagration.”

"Ich weiss dass ohne mich Gott nicht ein Nun kann leben.
Werd' ich zu nicht, Er muss von Noth den Geist aufgeben"
(I, 8).³²

"Gott mag nicht ohne mich ein einziges Würmlein machen.
Erhalt Ich's nicht mit Ihm, so muss es stracks zukrachen"
(I, 96).³³

This abolition of distinctions which takes place in man and in his relation to God, is the case with God also. He too, since He is infinite, can have neither passions nor parts; for these would constitute limitation. He is incomplex, of whom no affirmation can be made. The more He is known, the more He becomes unknowable.

"Mensch, Gott gedenket nichts. Ja, wär'n in Ihm gedanken,
So könnt Er hin und her, welch's Ihm nicht zusteht, wanken"
(V, 173).³⁴

"Wir beten: es gescheh, mein Herr und Gott, dein Wille;
Und sieh, Er hat nicht Will'; Er ist ein ew'ge Stille" (I, 294).³⁵

"Gott ist ein lauter Nichts; Ihn rührt kein Nun noch Hier.
Je mehr du nach Ihm greifst, je mehr entwid Er dir" (I, 25).³⁶

Silesius, however, is saved from the abyss of Quietism, the reducing of God to an unintelligible *x*, by his ebullient insistence upon the glories of God — His bountifulness, long-suffering, grace, love, will. These he persists in rejoicing in, regardless of the exigencies of thought which would forbid them. He is convinced that though the clouds of dialectic and the darkness of infinity are

³² "Apart from me, I know God cannot live a minute.
Should I leave life, He too could not continue in it."

³³ "God without me cannot create a worm. If I
Hold not with Him, it and creation's self would die."

³⁴ "God thinks not. Had He thoughts, they must go here and yonder.
But it consists not with His changelessness to wander."

³⁵ "'Thy will be done, O Lord my God!' we pray not well.
He has no will, but in eternal calm must dwell."

³⁶ "God is a simple Naught; He has nor Here nor Now.
The more thou searchest Him, the less attainest thou."

round about God, yet righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne. This conviction the Cherubinischer Wandersmann carries with him in all his travels.

Like all the Mystics, Silesius holds that the knowledge of God comes not through the processes of the intellect but through intuitive perception; it is a vision, not a conclusion. He echoes the Apostle's declaration, "Knowledge puffeth up, but love upbuildeth."

"Viel wissen blähet auf. Dem Geb' ich Lob und Preis,
Der den Gekreuzigten in seine Seele weiss" (V, 84).³⁷

"Der nächste Weg zu Gott ist durch die Liebe Thür.
Der Weg der Wissenschaft bringt dich gar langsam für" (V, 320).³⁸

"Halt an, mein Augustin; eh' du wirst Gott ergründen,
Wird man das ganze Meer in einem Grüblein finden" (IV, 22).³⁹

Of the path which leads to the knowledge of God he says with Isaiah: "A highway shall be there, even a way, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for others. The wayfaring men though fools shall not err therein."

I have accused Scheffler of stumbling at times into felicity of expression or thought or even into beauty. Perhaps passages like these may justify the accusation:

"Stirb, ehe du noch stirbst, damit du nicht darfst sterben
Wann du nun sterben sollst; sonst möchtest du verderben" (IV, 77).⁴⁰

³⁷ "Much knowledge puffs one up. Him rather I extol
Who knows the Crucified abiding in his soul."

³⁸ "The nearest way that leads to God is through love's gate.
Who takes the way of knowledge, comes by far too late."

³⁹ "Stay, Augustine; ere thou reducest God to rule,
A man will find the whole of ocean in a pool."

⁴⁰ "Die now before thou diest, that thou mayst not die
When thou shalt die; else shalt thou die eternally."

"Ein Kind, das auf der Welt nur eine Stunde bleibt,
Das wird so alt als man Mathusalem beschreibt" (II, 168).⁴¹

"In Gott ist alles Gott; ein einziges Würmelein
Das ist in Gott so viel als tausend Gotte seyn" (II, 243).⁴²

"Die Seele die nichts sucht als eins mit Gott zu seyn,
Die lebt in steter Ruh', und hat doch steter Pein" (VI, 176).⁴³

"Gott ist nicht alles nah. Die Jungfrau und das Kind,
Die Zwei die sind's allein, die Gott's Gespielen sind" (I, 296).⁴⁴

"Die Ros' ist ohn Warum; sie blühet, weil sie blühet.
Sie acht't nicht ihrer selbst, fragt nicht, ob man sie siehet"
(I, 289).⁴⁵

"Mensch, suchst du Gott um Ruh', so ist dir noch nicht recht.
Du suchest dich, nicht Ihn; bist noch nicht Kind, nur Knecht"
(I, 58).⁴⁶

"Du klagst, die Creatur'n die bringen dich in Pein;
Wie? müssen sie doch mir ein Weg zu Gotte seyn" (II, 114).⁴⁷

This last couplet proclaims Silesius no ascetic, and anticipates the exhortation of Browning's Rabbi Ben Ezra:

"All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more now than flesh helps soul."

The Bible begins with a transcendent God, the world and all things therein made by a Creator outside it.

⁴¹ "A child who in the world lives but an hour, he
Is old as e'er Methuselah was said to be."

⁴² "What is of God is God. A thousand Gods, I say,
Might be; and yet a worm is God as much as they."

⁴³ "The soul that only seeks oneness with God to attain
Lives in perpetual peace, and has perpetual pain."

⁴⁴ "Two there are close to God—not all to Him are near—
The maiden and the child—these are God's playmates dear."

⁴⁵ "The rose is without 'Why?' It blows because it blows.
It cares not for itself, nor if seen even knows."

⁴⁶ "Seekest thou God for rest, thou hast thyself beguiled.
Thou seek'st thyself, not God; a servant, not a child."

⁴⁷ "The creatures, so laments thou, lead thy soul astray.
Nay, let them rather be for thee to God a way."

The Bible ends — if the Fourth Gospel is the book latest in date — with an immanent God, one who mingles Himself with the winds that blow as they list and with the words of our mouth and the meditation of our heart. These two streams of thought have engaged the attention not only of Christian thinkers but those of every place and time. How the two sides were to be combined was a problem which was especially urgent for the Christian Church in the second, third, and fourth centuries. How could the chasm between finite man and infinite God be crossed? how had it been crossed in the work of creation? how were spirit and matter related? how did evil enter the world, and what was evil? Almost all early thinkers were driven by these questions into some form of dualism. There were, they must believe, two Powers in conflict. Since spirit was the higher, matter was evil; it was the work of an inferior god. The material, the natural, was therefore to be fought against; the spiritual man could have nothing to do with it. Indeed, in so far as he was truly spiritual, he was already freed from and above it. This fundamental assumption of the essentially evil nature of matter is exactly contrary to that conclusion to which science now seems tending — that matter is a form of mind. Modern thought seems justifying us in saying that as God has only His own substance out of which to create, He is forever forming the world by an act of transubstantiation, and saying, "Take, eat; this is my body." But Hebrew religion, in its moments of clearest insight, set itself against dualism. The creation, it declared, was not the work of an inferior deity or deities, but both worlds, those of spirit and matter, were called into being by one and the same infinite God. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." The Prophet of the Exile was so daring that he did not hesitate to declare Jahveh to be the author of evil itself:

"I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil. I, the Lord, do all these things."⁴⁸

Of course this problem laid its heaviest grasp upon the early Christians in relation to the person and work of Jesus Christ. Starting from the same ground — the essentially evil nature of matter — two opposite schools of thought arose. The one — that of Cerinthus — held that Jesus, as the true son of Joseph and Mary, was, like his fellow-men, tainted with sin, though more righteous than others. The divine Logos was at his baptism joined with him; and these two continued together in the human body of Jesus, until at his death he cast off his flesh and became pure spirit. Dualism was thus seated in the very person of Christ. The other school, that of the Docetists, denied altogether the fleshly, that is evil, nature of Jesus, and maintained that he was human in appearance only, having no real human nature but a wholly spiritual one. This too established a dualism in Christ, through the failure of the different elements in him to constitute a unity. Round this problem, thus insoluble — to keep Jesus in touch with humanity, to assert his freedom from the taint of sin, and to proclaim at the same time the essential distinction between human and divine, and the inherent evil of the human — over and about this the currents of thought flowed for centuries hopelessly. Ideas, speculations, fancies, from sources Christian, Jewish, Oriental, classical, magical, all combined in the many and strange systems which came to be known as Gnosticism. Dualism stamped itself deep even upon orthodox Christianity, and it came to be taken for granted that there was a necessary opposition between faith and reason, grace and nature, supernatural and natural, the priest and the man, the Church and the world.

Such opinions could not remain speculative only. They involved a denial of that which to the author of

⁴⁸ Isa. 45 7.

the Johannine Epistles was life's most precious possession — the conviction that Jesus was the authentic revelation of the infinite God. For this denial gave birth to a disbelief in any ultimate standard, which resulted in antinomianism and immorality, and to a disregard of the corporate nature of religion, which then became gross selfishness. One who can see Jesus Christ, and yet not welcome in him the ideal of God and man, can do so, in this author's view, only by denying his own moral perceptions. And so he bursts out into the exclamation which is the central thought of all his Epistles, "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ!"⁴⁹

As religion has become more profound it has sternly demanded the unity of God. It will not allow many gods; there can be but one. But this just insistence upon monotheism has often failed to learn an important lesson from polytheism — the lesson of the value of complexity. To the polytheist the multifarious agencies of the world, though not all from the same source, are yet all divine. He sees "an earth crammed with heaven and every common bush afire with God." The monotheist must draw a line between what he considers is proper to God and what is not; and the result is, on one side a God all of a kind, and on the other side a large part of the world without a God in it. Moreover, the more completely he raises God above the world, the more he removes Him from apprehension. Anything in Him which humanity could touch would be a derogation to His uniqueness, and He therefore becomes not only solitary but unknowable, the x of a cosmic algebra. But monotheism may be saved from atheism by taking a hint from its sister polytheism and carrying it further. If the human mind demands both complexity and unity in God, then unity must itself be complex. And the moment the idea is apprehended, the mind exclaims in

⁴⁹ 1 John 2 22.

amazement at its own dulness, "Why, of course!" And then the instances come crowding in. Every government — so the modern world is perceiving — must include federated States; every complete family, both parents and children; every living body, nerves and muscles; every machine, wheels and shafts. Every union which is not such by cohesion only, must be organic, its parts finding the ground of their being in the whole and the whole present in every part. Then, says the mind, jumping from earth to heaven, the infinite must include the finite; then they are not diverse, the finite the opposite of the infinite. Then the finite belongs of necessity to the infinite, and the infinite must have it not out of kindness to the finite but in the interest of its own infinity. But if the finite is that which is limited, does not this establish limitation in the very bosom of the infinite? Yes, and because it is established there, it is no bar to infinity. For then infinity exhibits itself not as the unlimited but as the self-limited. The finite then becomes that which is limited from without itself and the infinite that which is limited from within itself; and at once the antagonisms of dualism and Angelus Silesius's paradox of the necessity of man to God disappear. God cannot exist without me any more than I can without God.

Dualism's method of uniting the human and the divine is quantitative. A certain amount of the human in one side of the scales displaces just so much of the divine on the other side. This is commercialism in a region in which commercialism is impossible. But the union between God and man must rather be qualitative. If we were to choose a word for the method, it would perhaps be "interpenetration." And in order to discover what that is we should turn to the instances of it by which we are surrounded. The thought of one mind flows into another not by displacing an equivalent bulk

there but by penetrating it, so that it becomes interwoven with the mind invaded while at the same time it belongs as fully as ever to the original owner. So the whole range of the personality of one passes into, fills, and becomes part of the personality of another.

“So close we dwelt, we hardly stood apart.
Before one spoke, subtly the other heard,
As hand serves hand without the need of word
In quick response, as pulse keeps touch with heart.”

To exhibit such union the best magnifying glass is marriage.

“For we have grown as part to part,
One filling out the other’s being;
Implying each, like blood and heart;
In each implied, like eyes and seeing.

“Such closest union has amazed
Our happy souls, its depths unfolding;
And through it, awe-struck, we have gazed,
God and His glory thus beholding.”

We find it expressed more accurately and profoundly in Shakespeare’s *Phœnix and Turtle*:

“So they loved, as love in twain
Had the essence but in one;
Two distincts, division none;
Number there in love was slain.

“Property was thus appalled,
That the self was not the same;
Single nature’s double name
Neither two nor one was called.

“Reason, in itself confounded,
Saw division grow together;
To themselves yet either-neither,
Simple were so well compounded

"That it cried, 'How true a twain
 Seemeth this concordant one!'
 Love hath reason, reason none,
 If what parts can so remain."

It was such a union that Jesus desired his disciples might have with him: "That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us. The glory which Thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one. All mine are Thine, and Thine are mine."⁵⁰

The line between different stages of being is everywhere difficult, sometimes impossible, to draw. Just where is this dividing line between the plant and the animal? between the animal and the human being? between a man and his friend? between the soul and God? Such lines are like the geographer's parallels and meridians, which must be imagined for the convenience of the student but which have no real existence. Long before this abolition of distinctions in kind was pointed out St. Paul saw and rejoiced in its higher developments. "Ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." It was to his mind the glory of the situation that there is a line running straight without break from every human soul through Christ to God. Man's humanity shades into the humanity of Jesus, and Jesus' humanity shades into his divinity, and his divinity shades into the divinity of the Godhead. This constitutes a bond between God and man, and gives each a need of and an essential hold on the other. The Bible

⁵⁰ St. John 17 21 f. I cannot refrain from calling attention to the misuse of this passage, according to which Jesus is supposed to be setting forth the importance of corporate unity, as it is called, of having but one ecclesiastical institution. But the union he desired with his disciples was to be like that between him and his Father, which was certainly not institutional. His words here refer to a union the very opposite of that contemplated by those who use them as an authorization of their demand for church-uniformity.

is full of the thought that God needs man's aid in redeeming the world, a real need, the withholding of which will retard the redemptive process. Meroz is cursed because it came not to the help of the Lord against the mighty. And it was this interwovenness of God and man which formed the ground of Jesus' argument for immortality. It is sometimes regarded as a mere quibble that he should put forth the statement, "I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob," as proof that these persons were still living.⁵¹ But the argument is sound. If Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were united to God while on earth, they came to form part of His being; and if once they became a part of Him, they must be ever a part, unless they have ceased to be such as in character they were. For God cannot change, and unless they did, they are still component and therefore living in Him; for God is not the God of the dead but of the living. Angelus Silesius likens the presence of God in all that is His to the presence of the number one in all the other numbers:

"Gleichwie die Einheit ist in einer jeden Zahl,
So ist auch Gott der Ein' in Dingen überall" (V, 3).⁵²

And this insistence of the One in demanding its implications is the assurance of the permanence of the parts and therefore of personal immortality.

"This, this we know;
For one must have its two,
If two are one — foreseeing,
Where thought can reach
Each soul will carry each
Stamped in its inmost being.

⁵¹ St. Matt. 22 32.

⁵² "As numbers great or small the number One imply,
So too is God the One in all things low or high."

“For one means two, and two means four,
And four means fifty million more;
And fifty million stopped the sun
Because they missed one little one.

“God cannot rest in His eternal bliss
Without each atom which was ever His.
If thou in me and I in thee have grown
And both in God, then all we three are one.”

Many of the followers of Mysticism have found peace in the great surrender it requires. When the tired mind gives up its problems, when the proud will bows itself, when the fierce passions cease their clamorous demands, then the soul feels itself lying without struggle and at rest in the arms of the infinite. Such a rest is indeed restful if it is temporary and partial. If it is thorough-going, it is death; for it is the annihilation of personality, and therefore a diminution of the glory of God. The Seer of the Apocalypse in his celestial vision once saw the voice of the place hushed; there was silence in heaven. But it was but for half an hour, and then the great chorus of praise and of judgment was resumed by angels and men.⁵³ If the doctrine of the complex infinite is true, God's glory consists not in the absence of other personalities but in their most numerous and fullest development. Each is not only an advertisement but an embodiment of Him. Let a man claim all knowledge as his right; let him sharpen his will till it is keen and firm; let him covet earnestly the best gifts; let him aim high—it cannot be too high. It is thus that he will be “for the Master's uses meet,” rather than by being “a broken and empty vessel.” The barren lifelessness of Mysticism is not the peace of heaven.

Many of the most noted Mystics have freed themselves from the deadening effect of its negations, because to them

⁵³ Rev. 8 2.

these were only parts of a higher affirmation, and it has been the glory of the affirmation in which they have rejoiced. To abstain from any assertion about God because of a narrow conception of personality is one thing; to abstain, blinded with seeing, because He is so gloriously beyond all description is another. To the higher Mystics therefore Mysticism has brought a wealth which persons of their temperament could probably have gained in no other way. Vistas open to them and far voices call. But the form of Mysticism which has leavened popular religious thought — and this leaven is extensive — is pernicious through the establishment of a false ideal — the suppression of personality as the means of approach to God. It is this which is largely responsible for that erroneous supposition of those who know religion but little, that it is feeble, joyless, measured by its abstentions, lacking in virility and power. Such a conception paralyzes effort; it does not hold up amplitude of life as the Christian's aim and right; it embalms a dead past. It refuses to follow the Psalmist when he declares, "I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living." Such souls, though starting with a vision of the glories of God, through a mistaken response to it become narrower and feebler; like the rivers which instead of growing fuller and richer as they roll, become more and more shallow, until at last they are dried up and lost in barren wastes of sand.

I said that Silesius holds that knowledge of God comes not through the processes of the intellect but through intuitive perception. This is a fundamental position of the Mystics, so fundamental that to many it seems almost their sole distinguishing characteristic. The knowledge of God is to them not understanding but vision, and therefore certainty. Ask them how they are sure of that "therefore," and they would perhaps ask in reply how you know that two and two are four. It is because it is;

and this conviction flashes upon them with a clearness and intensity which are their own assurance. Such evidence can of course be valid for themselves alone. The "Why?" which would be the bridge between them and others they cannot build. So though the sight of their confident faith may be impressive to a beholder, the grounds of it he must investigate for himself, for they cannot impart them. Yet this is not denying that these grounds may have validity for them. For the deepest intercourse between mind and mind is not limited by the senses but far transcends word or sight. The communications of the spirit are like the wind, of which "thou canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth." Samuel Butler says of excogitation: "Great thoughts are not to be caught in this way. They must present themselves for capture of their own free will, or be taken with a little coyness only."⁵⁴ All the processes of life at their fullest must be unconscious; otherwise, like manners, they become vulgar. But it must be an unconsciousness which is positive, not negative; that is, which has passed through the stage of consciousness and which may, if need be, revert to it at any moment and feel its intellectual base. The skilled pianist in the midst of his sonata does not think of notes or fingers; but if a hitch occurs, he can stop and adjust the one to the other. Wealth is measured by the things one takes as matters of course. To the poor man having a dinner is a ground for congratulation; the rich man accepts it as part of the un-thought-about order of things. If one is apprehensive how this or that will affect his friend, the friendship has not reached its height. "He that feareth is not made perfect in love." Consciousness is a necessary step to the fullest development, but it is not itself the highest step.

Science is telling us today of a means of intercourse, of which, while she confesses her ignorance what it is, she

⁵⁴ God the Known and God the Unknown; Chap. IV, II.

yet seems to have confidence that it is. This power of second sight, thought-transference, telepathy, which gives the key to faith-healing and many other apparent miracles, when it comes to our fuller knowledge will undoubtedly explain much of that immediate intercourse between minds which now seems mysterious or often merely imaginary. But if it is possible for thought to pass from one mind to another by intuitive perception, there is surely no field fitter for its exercise than between the soul and God. Ask a soul so engaged, "How do you know that it is God at the other end of the telephone and not your own fancies merely?" and he would probably smile and turn away repeating his steadfast conviction, "I knew a man caught up to the third heaven, whether in the body I cannot tell or out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth. But he heard unspeakable words, which it is not possible for man to utter."⁵⁵ All we can say of these mystic states is that they may rightfully carry authority for those who have them; that they can have no authority for others; but that to grant their authority for any one is to overthrow the claim of the intellectual powers to be the sole ground of authority. The Mystic's claim to immediacy in the perception of truth may point the way to a larger world than that dominated by the rational understanding, a world whose ways of intercourse are as much swifter than the ordinary processes of thought as wireless telegraphy is swifter than foot-messengers, a world in which St. John's sublime conjunction "for" is justified: "We shall be like Him, *for* we shall see Him as He is."

Spinoza was said to be a God-intoxicated man. Angelus Silesius was a man who panted to lose himself in God. But it must surely be that He who wills not that one of His little ones should perish, would not permit such suicide to be successful, but that one who thus aimed to

⁵⁵ 2 Cor. 12 2.

lose his life for God's sake would find it. The epitaph which he wrote "On an Upright Man" may well be his own:

"Hier ist ein Mann gelegt, der stets im Durste lebte,
Und nach Gerechtigkeit bey Tag und Nachte strebte,
Und nie gesättigt ward. Nun ist ihm allbereit
Sein Durst gestillt mit Gott der süßen Ewigkeit" (III, 49).

"Here lies a man who lived in thirst alway,
Who strove for righteousness by night and day,
And ne'er was satisfied. But, thirstless, he
Now dwells with God in sweet eternity."

Angelus Silesius sought God; and, as always, more abundantly than he had dreamed God met him. Like a river which, hemmed in on this side and on that, still struggles on, ever aiming at the sea; when before it reaches the shore, the great tide rushes up, meets it, enfolds it, and sweeps it into the mighty depths in which it finds the glad fulfilment of its aim.